



# **WTC SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT**

## **SEPTEMBER 2021**

The Designated Officer for Safeguarding and Prevention of Abuse is

**Janey Lawry-White**

The Deputy Designated Officer for Safeguarding and Prevention of Abuse is

**Lucy Peppiatt**

The Board Representative for Safeguarding and Prevention of Abuse is

**Nigel Langford**

## Statement of Intent

It is the policy of WTC to safeguard vulnerable adults by protecting them from all forms of abuse and manipulation including physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

### At WTC we are committed to:

- Providing a safe and trusted environment for theological study including the care and respectful pastoral ministry for all students, Faculty, staff members, Hub Directors (HD), Programme Directors (PD) and volunteers including vulnerable adults who engage with WTC
- Ensuring that staff, Faculty, volunteers, HDs and PDs accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop awareness of issues which cause harm to vulnerable adults. Signposting adults who disclose abuse towards agencies and organisations which can support them

### WTC aims to:

- Reduce risks of significant harm to vulnerable adults (students, Faculty, staff, HDs, PDs, volunteers) from abuse and exploitation, while listening to and supporting individuals
- Ensure that all staff, Faculty, HDs, PDs, volunteers and students know that safeguarding is everyone's business, and that WTC has a responsibility to prevent, detect and report abuse and to respond appropriately by directing those in need to relevant services and organisations

WTC students study remotely, with the exception of Hub evenings and Residentials. During Hub evenings, students are protected by the Safeguarding Policies of Hub locations. During Residentials, they are protected by this Code of Conduct.

This Code of Conduct also applies to WTC staff-members in pursuit of their work responsibilities in the office or elsewhere.

WTC provides tertiary education for adult students. They, together with staff, HDs, PDs, Faculty members and volunteers are the subject of this Code of Conduct.

### This Code of Conduct is based on WTC values and beliefs:

- The inspiration and authority of Scripture in matters of faith and practice
- A priority on caring for the spiritual, physical and emotional well-being of our students, staff, Faculty, HDs, PDs and volunteers
- A commitment to relinquishing power, control and manipulation in relationships
- The complete equality of men and women in all spheres of life

### and on:

- Human rights and the law
- Good safeguarding practice

- Learning from the past

### **WTC will:**

- Promote a safe environment and culture at Hubs and at the Residentials for students, Faculty and WTC staff, and in the WTC Central office for WTC staff
- Ensure that all those providing pastoral and other support to students, Faculty and staff are aware of, and behave in accordance with, this Safeguarding Code of Conduct and good practice
- Respond promptly to every safeguarding concern of allegation
- Share information about concerns with agencies who need to know with reference to vulnerable adults following the wishes of survivors
- Provide appropriate and safe pastoral care for survivors of abuse and other affected persons, while signposting them to statutory agencies who can help them in the longer term
- Care pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns/allegations of abuse and other affected persons
- Respond to those who may pose a risk to others
- Provide effective management oversight for staff, HDs, PDs, Faculty and volunteers through supervision, support and training

### **Contact Telephone Numbers**

The Designated Officer for Safeguarding and Prevention of Abuse is Janey Lawry-White (07952 351421).

The Deputy Designated Officer for Safeguarding and Prevention of Abuse is Lucy Peppiatt (07803 901095).

*Other relevant service contacts:*

Police Emergencies 999 Police

Non emergencies 101

National Domestic Violence Helpline 0808 2000 247 (lines free and open 24 hours)

Phone if you are experiencing domestic abuse

[Women's Aid confidential chat line](#)

Samaritans Free Helpline: 116 123

There are local helplines to ring where you live to report domestic abuse and violence against women and girls. Look for these on the internet

Restored relationships <https://www.restoredrelationships.org/> and PressRed <https://pressred.org/> are Christian NGOs working to raise awareness of and end violence against women in the church.

### **Guidelines for Faculty, HDs, WTC Staff, volunteers and contractors**

Faculty, HDs, PDs, volunteers and staff must at all times show respect and understanding for individual's rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in

a way consistent with WTC values:

- Treating everyone, and particularly vulnerable adults, with respect and dignity
- Always listening to what vulnerable adults say
- Valuing others and recognising the unique contribution each individual can make
- Using appropriate language
- Respecting individuals right to privacy - praying and providing pastoral care in a respectful manner (not invading personal space or involving physical touch without first asking if this is appropriate)
- Not spending excessive time alone with people on their own
- Not drawing conclusions about others without checking facts
- Never trivialising or exaggerating abuse issues, making suggestive remarks or gestures to vulnerable people, even in fun

### **Reporting abuse**

If you have information about a safeguarding situation where an adult is in immediate danger or requires immediate medical attention call the emergency services on 999.

For adult survivors of abuse, it is *their* decision whether to report incidents and press charges. Survivors' informed decisions should be followed.

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, HD, PD, Faculty or volunteer, the allegation must be passed to the Safeguarding or Deputy Safeguarding Officers and the Board contact informed. WTC's Disciplinary/Complaints Procedure will be followed.<sup>1</sup>

Reports of all allegations and the response taken must be kept securely whether or not the survivor wishes to pursue a course of action.

### **Response to disclosure**

- Listen to the adult making the allegation, rather than questioning them directly
- Offer them reassurance without making promises (ie abuse is never the survivor's fault; they have done the correct thing in coming forward)
- Take what they say seriously
- Allow them to speak without interruption
- Accept what is said. It is not your role to investigate or question
- Do not overreact
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation while passing no judgement
- Advise that you will try to offer support, and ask if they wish to pass the information on

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<sup>1</sup> The Disciplinary/Complaints Procedure is detailed in the Staff Handbook

- Point the survivor to relevant organisations which can help (see telephone numbers above)
- Record the discussion accurately as soon as possible after the event
- Use the survivor's words/explanations - do not translate into your own words in case you have misconstrued what they are trying to say. Record any discussions or actions taken within 24 hours
- Do not discuss the disclosure with anyone except the principle Safeguarding contacts for WTC and the Board contact

### **Types of abuse**

1. *Physical abuse* - Including hitting, shaking, poisoning, burning or scalding and/or causing physical harm.
2. *Sexual abuse* - Includes forcing or enticing vulnerable adults to take part in sexual activities including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. Includes non-contact activities and involvement in the production of inappropriate sexual online images without prior permission of the person involved.
3. *Emotional abuse* - Persistent emotional maltreatment such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on emotional development, such as conveying that someone is worthless, bullying, causing them frequently to feel in danger.
4. *Spiritual abuse* - A form of emotional and psychological abuse characterised by a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious context. Includes control through the use of sacred texts/teaching, manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision-making, coercion to conform.
5. *Financial abuse* - The use or mis-use of money limiting or controlling a partner's current and future actions and their freedom of choice.

### **Publicising the Code of Conduct**

This Code of Conduct will be available on the WTC website and on the student portal, MyWTC. It will be reviewed annually by the Board. All members of staff, Faculty, HDs, PDs and volunteers will familiarise themselves with the details of this Code of Conduct annually.

Safeguarding Officers will receive appropriate training on a regular basis, at least every 2 years.

### **Responsibility for Safeguarding**

Everybody is responsible for being aware of safeguarding issues and knowing how to respond appropriately should an allegation or disclosure be made. Managers must manage risks and ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are in place,

reviewed once a year, available to the public and are known to staff, Faculty, HDs, PDs and students.

Trustees are ultimately accountable and responsible for putting things right if something goes wrong.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/review-your-charitys-safeguarding-and-governance-arrangements-charity-commission-advises>